



**GLF
AMAZONIA**

TIPPING POINT

**Solutions
from
the inside
out**

22-23
September
2021



Online and around the world

#GLFAmazonia

Concept Note

On 22-23 September 2021, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) will host the largest global conference on the Amazon Biome, to bring to the fore local solutions to preserve and restore the biological and cultural diversity of the world's largest humid tropical forest. This event will be held as **40 percent of the Amazon nears the tipping point** of irreversibly losing its function as water generating rainforest – a catastrophe for human well-being and planetary health that can still be prevented if the world acts *now*.

The tragedy of the COVID-19 pandemic has sharpened the global community's attention to the social justice and ecological challenges – including climate change – that our societies face. As youth across the globe, as well as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC), continue to demand today's decision-makers to take meaningful action on climate change and sustainable finance, leaders across all sectors of society – both public and private – are beginning to rethink current economic models. As such, a unique opportunity exists to catalyze change for the Amazon.

The two-day digital conference will take place during Climate Week 2021 (September 20-26), and lead into the 30th anniversary of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. The event – and the activities and coverage in the months leading up to and following it – will serve to spotlight, amplify and support existing and ongoing locally-led initiatives and leading scientific research and campaigns. It will also provide a pathway for alliances, collaborations, outcomes, agreements, policy asks and recommendations to inform the United Nations' Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in November 2021.

The conference invites practitioners; Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs); Afro-descendant Peoples (ADPs); quilombolas and maroons; peasant and women's, farmers', conservation, development and other civil society organizations; community leaders; researchers; policymakers; financial investors and private sector representatives; youth groups; activists; and other local and global actors to attend and engage.

The event will be packed with plenaries, interactive sessions, launchpads, networking opportunities and learning journeys designed to engage those living in, fighting for and/or trialing innovative business, farming and governance models within the Amazon Biome. A dedicated media training session for journalists from across the Amazon and a social media bootcamp will develop capacity and amplify reach and impact.

The **Amazon Biome** is defined as the area covered predominantly by dense moist tropical forest, with relatively small inclusions of several other types of vegetation such as savannas, floodplain forests, grasslands, swamps, bamboos and palm forests. The biome encompasses 6.7 million square kilometers (2.6 million square miles) and is shared by eight countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana and Suriname), as well as the overseas territory of French Guiana. The complete watersheds expand beyond the biome and sometimes include adjacent biomes (dry forest, cerrado and puna).



Why the Amazon?

The Amazon Biome is one of the most culturally and biologically diverse regions on Earth.

It is a large and dynamic landscape cutting across many country, district, tribal and ethnic borders with different economic models, political systems and visions for the future where multiple actors, livelihoods, and ideas coexist, compete and cooperate.

The biome is home to more than **410** ethnic groups – including both Afro-descendent and Indigenous Peoples – 60% of which still remain largely isolated. Together with Andean and lower-altitude mountain forests, the tropical rainforest provides vital ecosystem services such as food, water and medicines, and holds spiritual significance for millions of people.

The biome is one of the most important global storehouses of biodiversity, harboring over 10% of Earth's known species – including many that are endemic and/or endangered.

The 6,600-kilometer (4101-mile) Amazon River is one of the two largest rivers on Earth. It contributes to over 15% of the world's total river discharge into the oceans, providing water and nutrients to an area twice the size of India.

The Amazon's canopy cover helps regulate regional climate through forest-dependent hydrological cycles, and **generates almost half of its own rainfall**. The biome contains 90-140 billion metric tons of stored carbon, the release of even a portion of which would accelerate global warming significantly.

However, uncontrolled expansion of cattle ranches, agriculture and mining combined with unsustainable extraction of timber and wildlife, is threatening the Amazon's unique biology and cultures. Over the past 50 years, an United-Kingdom-sized area of the Amazon has been deforested and **a football-pitch-sized area is currently being cleared every single minute, according to satellite data**.

Human- and land-rights violations towards environmental defenders are at an all-time high, with

IPLCs at a disproportional risk of reprisals and the greater Amazon region particularly affected. An inclusive, equitable, resilient, sustainable and profitable nature-based path for the Amazon can only emerge from the inside out, led by the Amazonian people and their organizations.

COVID-19

The global COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that human society is entirely capable of mobilizing resources, adapting lifestyles and uniting behind a single goal – all of which we will need to do in order to save the Amazon Biome and mitigate global climate change. However, it also exposed the vulnerability of our economies to shocks, and has laid bare deep social inequalities that threaten to derail progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. **A large number** of IPLCs, many of which play traditional environmental stewardship roles, have been hit particularly hard by the disease. COVID-19, like **Ebola**, has reminded us that deforestation and forest fragmentation brings people and wildlife into close contact, leading to higher risks of zoonotic diseases. The GLF hopes that the conversations convened around this event will help ensure post-pandemic recovery efforts are both equitable and sustainable and help inspire the changes needed to maintain the vital functions of the Amazon Biome, the world's climate and the recognition and respect of the stewards of nature.

Building on existing knowledge – solutions from the inside out

GLF Amazonia will bring together different kinds of knowledge, highlighting both local solutions – including those that indigenous peoples have practiced and adapted throughout their histories – as well as more recent innovations that have been developed to ensure equitable, just and sustainable use and distribution of the Amazon's resources.

Ecological Tipping Point:

Finding sustainable pathways for the Amazon is imperative, as forest conversion and degradation together with climate change are fueling forest fires and driving the ecosystem dangerously close to **an irreversible tipping point** (which scientists have estimated to occur at around **20-25%** total deforestation from current levels). There is no time to lose. Earth systems modeling shows that 50-60% of the eastern, southern and central Amazon rainforest would be replaced by degraded landscapes and dry forests if the system were to flip to a **new vegetation-climate equilibrium**. The **solutions** we seek must urgently address the synergistic effects of climate and land-use change to avoid altering the biome forever.

A territorial or landscape approach offers a holistic, integrated perspective at a scale that allows for meaningful and effective solutions. It is at the territorial or landscape level where different types of use can be combined and balanced. It is also the level at which meaningful impact and change becomes imaginable – from tackling insecure tenure, community and gender rights and addressing food insecurity and declining rural livelihoods and health, to restoring degraded ecosystems, protecting and conserving biodiversity-rich landscapes, and promoting sustainable value chains and use of natural resources.

Proposed conference objectives and themes

Convening under the theme of ‘Solutions from the inside out’, participants will focus on accelerating sustainable, nature-based action towards an equitable and resilient Amazon Biome, by adopting an integrated, transboundary and rights-based approach that protects the tenure rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Afro-descendent Peoples. As pioneered at the 2020 **GLF Biodiversity: One World, One Health Digital Conference**, the GLF will apply a multidisciplinary approach in which the power of multiple disciplines to work together for optimal human, animal and environmental health can be harnessed.

GLF’s last conference of 2021, **GLF Glasgow: Forest, Food, Finance – A New Deal for Earth**, will take place less than two months after GLF Amazonia, and it will provide a platform to inform the formal UNFCCC process with the earlier event’s outcomes, questions and recommendations.

Objectives

The conference aims to provide and/or facilitate:

1. learning from and across the different biocultural identities in the Amazon Biome, and the development of a common vision for a sustainable future for the biome and its people;
2. a platform for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Afro-descendent Peoples to voice their needs, ambitions and visions on assuring a safe and prosperous future for themselves and their families;
3. sustainable finance and responsible investment for inclusive and resilient value chains;
4. new commitments to upscale cross-sectoral land-use planning in the Amazon Biome;
5. a dialogue between indigenous knowledge and practices, and innovative technologies derived from Western science;
6. a spotlight on nature-based businesses that can be brought to scale; and
7. knowledge and understanding of synergies between existing coalitions and movements.

Themes

Much work and research has been done in the greater Amazon region. Recognizing and building on this work, GLF has identified the following key topics, questions and challenges that will be defined by partners and participants, through a transparent, collaborative agenda-setting process:



The various biocultural identities of the Amazon Biome

- What are the contemporary biocultural identities in the Amazon, and how can these contribute to securing the future of the landscape?
- How do local actors define human-nature relationships based on local philosophies and how do these concepts find expression in natural resource management and economic activities?
- What role do civil society and grassroots organizations play in preventing the biome's ecological and cultural collapse? How are these connected and resourced? How has COVID-19 impacted these organizations?
- How to strengthen existing alliances and help foster a new coalition to sustain and save the biocultural identity of the Amazon?
- What are the key elements required to establish impactful, sustainable movements and raise awareness on the challenges faced in the Amazon? How can connections with, and lessons learned from, movements beyond the Amazon Biome support local movements?

An equitable, resilient and circular bioeconomy

- What are the models, elements and opportunities for an equitable, resilient circular bioeconomy?
- How can sustainable value chains support a circular bioeconomy and which green commodities should be supported to promote ecosystem conservation and restoration? What kinds of investments are needed? What are the drivers to catalyze sustainable finance for green commodities value chains and restoration projects?
- How can local communities transition from beneficiaries to partners in development programs?
- What role can and should local micro, small, medium and large enterprises play in creating an equitable, resilient and circular bioeconomy?
- What are the incentives and opportunities for public-private partnerships?
- What role can and should be played by supply chain due diligence?
- What role can and should be played by overseas businesses, investors, governments, NGOs and other actors from outside the basin?

Transboundary governance and cross-sectorial land-use planning

- Definition and governance of Amazonian regional public goods
- What are the implications of the relationship between the Andes and Amazon ecosystems? And Leticia Pact?
- What are common entry points for regional governance aiming at conservation, sustainable use of biological diversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of such biodiversity

in the Amazon region? Who can facilitate regional cooperation and coordination? What are the capacity needs for institutional change?

- Solutions for inclusion of local institutions and rights-holders
- Which cross-sectorial land-use planning programs and initiatives are proving successful, and why?
- How should we mainstream biodiversity and the protection of Indigenous rights into different sectors?

Incentives, disincentives and policy instruments

- What opportunities exist through environmental, social and governance (ESG) mandated investment funds?
- How can legal stakeholders be empowered and strengthened?
- What is the status of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' as well as Afro-descendent Peoples' tenure rights? What strategies could be used to scale up recognition, protection and security of these rights?
- What examples exist of enabling regulatory frameworks that consider the diversity of biocultural identities?
- What examples exist of regulatory frameworks that encourage behaviors that will contribute to building a profitable, inclusive, equitable, resilient and sustainable biome? What sets them apart, and what can we learn from them? What kind of changes are needed in regulatory frameworks such as mining and oil policy, and plans that affect the biome's biodiversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' as well as Afro-descendent Peoples'?
- How can and do overseas governments' advice (e.g. nutrition advice on meat consumption); regulation (e.g. bans on imported deforestation); subsidies (e.g. subsidies on batteries for electric cars and solar panels requiring minerals found in the Amazon); and foreign assistance support and/or undermine local initiatives and policies?

The role of technology and traditional knowledge

- What role can and should technology play within the biome – from information technology connecting remote areas, to logistical solutions and monitoring? What innovative examples exist that are ready for replication, scaling or investment? What gaps and innovation needs remain?
- How can technology support Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Afro-descendent Peoples in monitoring their territories, as well as guaranteeing livelihood and inclusion?

Who is this event for?

The GLF Amazonia is expected to convene more than 5,000 participants, engage tens of thousands more online, and reach tens of millions globally. The conference invites practitioners; Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs); Afro-descendant Peoples (ADPs); quilombolas and maroons; peasant and women's, farmers', conservation, development and other civil society organizations; community leaders; researchers; policymakers; financial investors and private sector representatives; youth groups; activists; and other local and global actors who are actively engaged in creating a sustainable, resilient and inclusive nature-based economies and implementing regulatory frameworks in the greater Amazon region.

We will bring local experience to the highest levels of global policy-making to bridge gaps between actors and sectors and help scale up promising initiatives and practices. We are also exploring opportunities to collaborate with local partners on translating knowledge into inclusive online learning journeys.

A growing global online community and movement for change

The year of 2020 was marked by a global pandemic and various climate and environmental crises, GLF was one of the few organizations able to swiftly move its functions and communications online. In 2019, GLF predicted a trend toward digital conferencing, especially with the growing tension among the environmental community to fly less. It was decided that its flagship conference, GLF Bonn, would be held entirely online in 2020.

The GLF conferences have been attended by a combined total of 250,000 participants from 185 countries, and the GLF's youth program has involved more than 60,000 current and future leaders under the age of 35. Also, GLF's conferences typically reach between 35 and 50 million in social media, having more than 5,000 participants per digital conference.

The digital conference format has allowed GLF's reach, conference attendance, gender, sectoral and regional inclusivity and audience engagement to grow exponentially - while at the same time drastically reducing CO2 emissions and saving public funds.

GLF Amazonia will facilitate even wider accessibility via mobile devices and will provide low-bandwidth content to ensure the broadest possible participation - especially by those living in remote areas. The GLF will reach out to and partner with government agencies, NGOs, communications companies and technological experts

to further enable this access. Through our purpose-built conference platform, participants across the Amazon will be encouraged to connect and organize subgroups and - where possible and safe - face-to-face meetups (while following public health and safety regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19). This blended format makes for a more inclusive forum, while cutting the greenhouse gas emissions incurred by conventional in-person events.

The GLF has also been invited by the Government of the United Kingdom to play a role in the upcoming UNFCCC COP26 process in November this year, by collaborating to organize a three-day hybrid conference, **GLF Glasgow**, that will spotlight how forests, sustainable food systems and sustainable finance can accelerate action toward achieving the Paris Agreement goals. This will allow the GLF to take forward outcomes, policy asks and recommendations from GLF Amazonia to decision-makers and influencers at the COP.

In addition, financial institutions have a role to play in avoiding damaging impacts on the Amazon Biome and proactively channeling financing towards ecosystem conservation and restoration. Sustainable finance mechanisms can offer important solutions - providing it does not only screen out ecosystem and biodiversity-related investment risks, but also increases the amount of capital available to support nature-based solutions at scale.

Youth in Landscapes Initiative

Young people are amongst the leading defenders of the Amazon - sometimes at great personal risk. In collaboration with the **Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)**; GLF's Restoration Steward for forests in Argentina and her affiliated organization (**Proyecto Reserva Natural Monte Alegre**); GLFx chapters; and other local youth organizations, the GLF will invite young people to take part in both GLF Amazonia and a series of pre-event dialogues, which will help to shape the event itself and incorporate the needs and perspectives of local youth.

GLFx

The **GLFx initiative** is designed to enable local communities to accelerate action on the ground through the Landscape Approach, while building connections across the vast GLF global network. At GLF Amazonia, local GLFx chapters will kick-start a new network of independently-organized local actors committed to conserving, protecting and restoring their Amazonian landscapes. These local chapters will also work to strengthen existing communities of practice, and help pave the way to conserving, protecting and restoring the Amazon Biome from its current course of biocultural collapse.

Ways to participate

The two-day event will be packed with plenaries, interactive sessions, structured networking, virtual tours, documentary screenings, press conferences and more.

There are many other ways to participate, including hosting and/or attending activities such as learning tracks, inspirational talks, plenaries, interactive sessions, #GLFLive Q&A sessions, polls, launchpads and more. For more information, please contact GLF Global Assistant Coordinator **Judith Sonneck** (j.sonneck@cgjar.org).

Communications, outreach and engagement

LF Amazonia will leverage the communication and digital marketing capacity of the GLF and the Center for International Forestry Research – World Agroforestry Centre (CIFOR-ICRAF), as well as of the 31 GLF Charter Members, engaged partners, influencers and conference speakers' and participants' networks, to inform an inclusive, equitable, resilient, sustainable and profitable future for the Amazon region and its people and the global climate.

The building blocks for this narrative include multimedia and social media content, as well as local perspectives and human-interest stories on the ground that bring to life the complex biological and cultural systems that define the Amazon's landscapes. Content and campaigns will be disseminated in Spanish, Portuguese and English (with other languages to be determined) in order to engage comprehensively with regional and international audiences, with a focus on attracting and retaining a large audience in Latin America in particular.

Prior to the event, a media training will take place online with up to 40 journalists from across the Amazon Biome. The GLF will also seek media partnerships with key publications, blogs, podcasts and radio stations in the target countries.

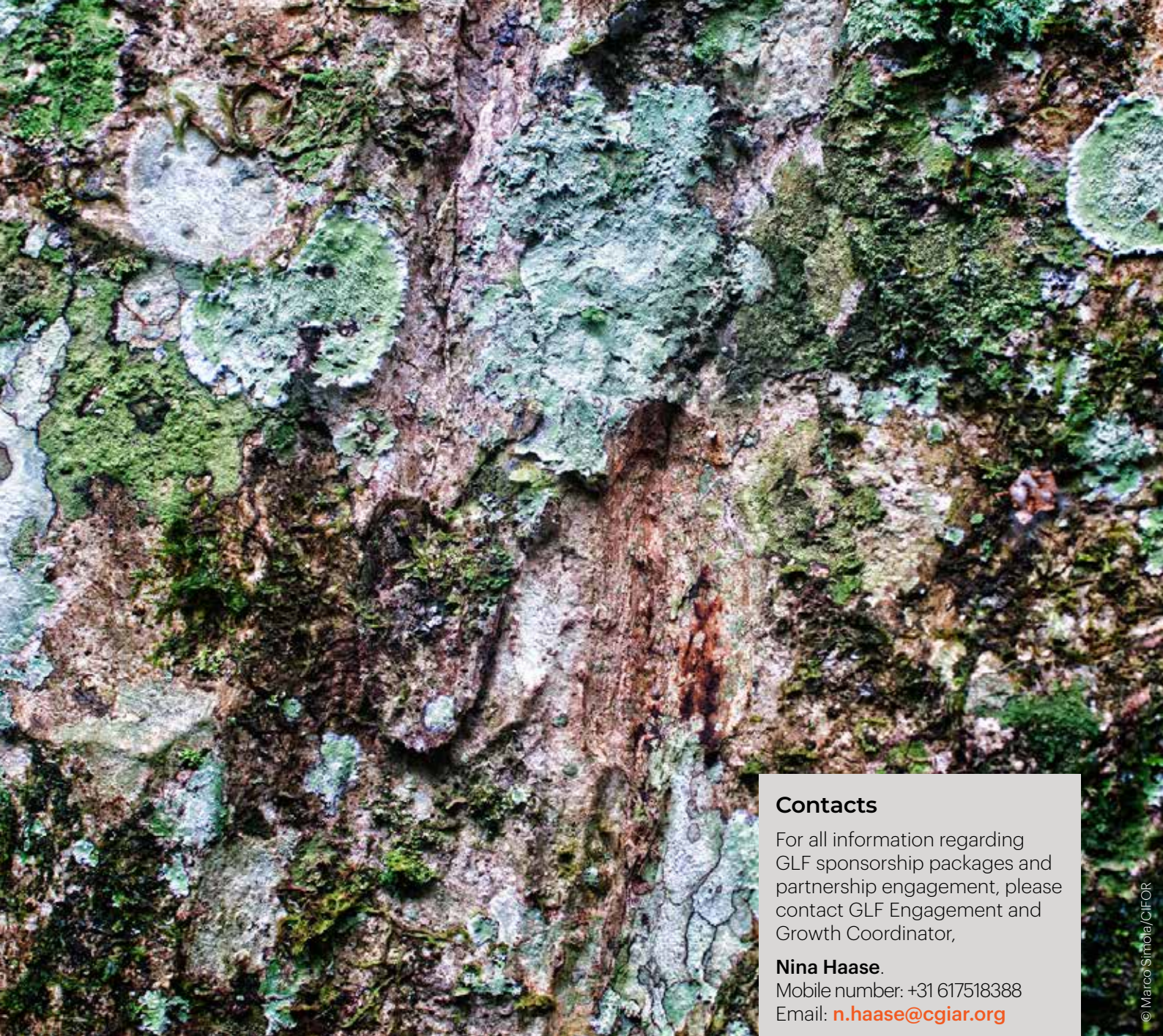
The 2021 cohort of 34 young volunteers acting as GLF social media ambassadors, from 24 countries across Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe, will report the conference in real-time, using their own social media channels on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube e LinkedIn to spark meaningful conversations on landscape approaches to address environmental, social and health challenges.

GLF Amazonia's local, global, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities and Afro-descendent Peoples partners, as well as its Charter Members, will contribute insights and content, and are invited to join the communications committee. For more information, please contact GLF Communications Coordinator **Melissa Angel** (m.kayeangel@cgjar.org).

Sponsorship opportunities

Over the past eight years, the GLF has reached close to a billion people across the world and established itself as the world's largest forum on integrated and sustainable land use management, supported by the **GLF Charter Members** – 30 leading development organizations that include the World Bank, World Wildlife Fund, World Resources Institute and Rainforest Alliance. Brands that support the GLF are associated with a movement that has so far engaged 7,400 entities, including international organizations, governments, universities, corporations and community groups.

Sponsorship packages are available, as well as custom-made and exclusive sponsorships, such as supporting a specific **community of practice**, a GLFx chapter, **youth activities** and more. For more information, please contact GLF Engagement and Growth Coordinator **Nina Haase** (n.haase@cgjar.org).



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Global Landscapes Forum

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihood initiatives, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), in collaboration with its co-founders UN Environment and the World Bank and Charter Members.

Charter Members: CIAT, CIFOR, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, Ecoagriculture Partners, EFI, Evergreen Agriculture, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, ILRI, INBAR, IPMG, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, RRI, SAN, UN Environment, (TMG) Think Tank, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, part of Wageningen Research, WFO, World Agroforestry, World Bank Group, WRI, WWF Germany, Youth in Landscapes Initiative.

Funding partners

